掌の歌
GOD
...

ARE THEY SET IN STONE FROM OUR FIRST MOMENTS ...?
THE THINGS WE HUMANS CAN GRASP WITH OUR OPEN HANDS ...

AND...

THE MONEY TO BUY WHATEVER I WANT
FOOD THAT TASTES GOOD

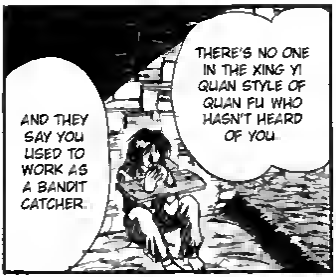
I WANTED TO TAKE HOLD OF ...

OF A BEAUTIFUL WOMAN ...
THE HAND ...
BUT...
MY HAND WAS ALREADY CLENCHED TIGHT IN A FIST.

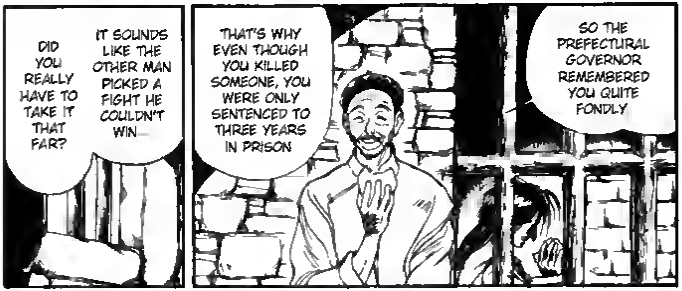
掌の歌
Song of the Open Palm

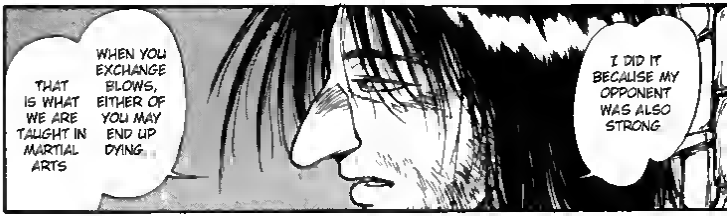
SFX. POW POW CLATTER

SO YOU'RE STILL AT IT...
HERE'S YOUR FOOD, YU SHENG.
SFX CLATTER
SFX CLATTER RATTLE
BUT IT'S NOT JUST THE USUAL DULLNESS TODAY.
LOOK! A STEAMED BUN!
OH, REALLY... SO, MR JAILER, WAS IT A BOY?
YES, MY FIRST GRAND-CHILD IS A BOY
SO I MANAGED TO SNEAK THAT BUN PAST THE WARDEN.

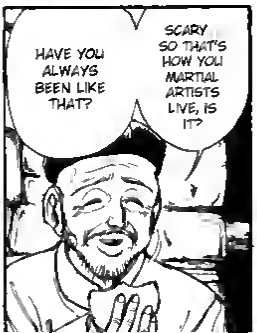

AND THEY SAY YOU USED TO WORK AS A BANDIT CATCHER.
THERE'S NO ONE IN THE XING YI QUAN STYLE OF QUAN FU WHO HASN'T HEARD OF YOU.

YOU'RE A MARTIAL ARTIST WHO CAN DEFEAT ANYONE IN A SINGLE BLOW, RIGHT?
Y'KNOW, YU SHENG, YOU'RE PRETTY FAMOUS

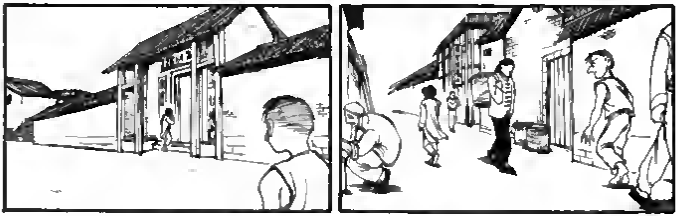

DID YOU REALLY HAVE TO TAKE IT THAT FAR?
IT SOUNDS LIKE THE OTHER MAN PICKED A FIGHT HE COULDN'T WIN...
THAT'S WHY EVEN THOUGH YOU KILLED SOMEONE, YOU WERE ONLY SENTENCED TO THREE YEARS IN PRISON.
SO THE PREFECTURAL GOVERNOR REMEMBERED YOU QUITE FONDLY.

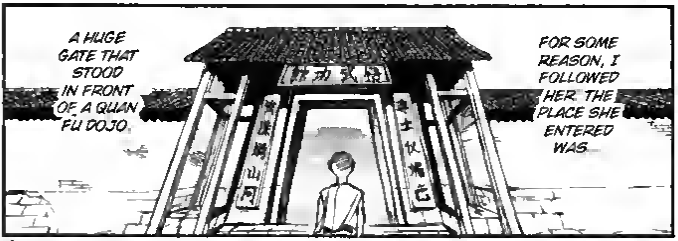

THAT IS WHAT WE ARE TAUGHT IN MARTIAL ARTS
WHEN YOU EXCHANGE BLOWS, EITHER OF YOU MAY END UP DYING.
I DID IT BECAUSE MY OPPONENT WAS ALSO STRONG.

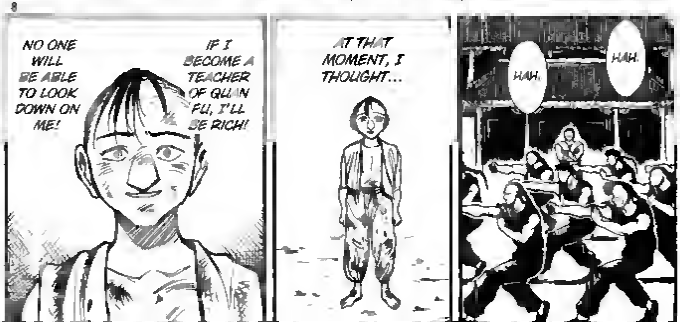
I STARTED OUT AS A THUG.

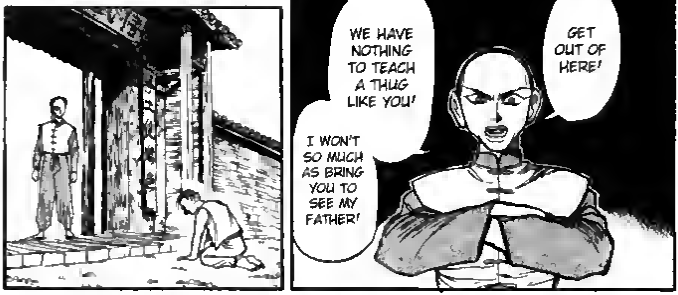

HAVE YOU ALWAYS BEEN LIKE THAT?
SCARY SO THAT'S HOW YOU MARTIAL ARTISTS LIVE, IS IT?

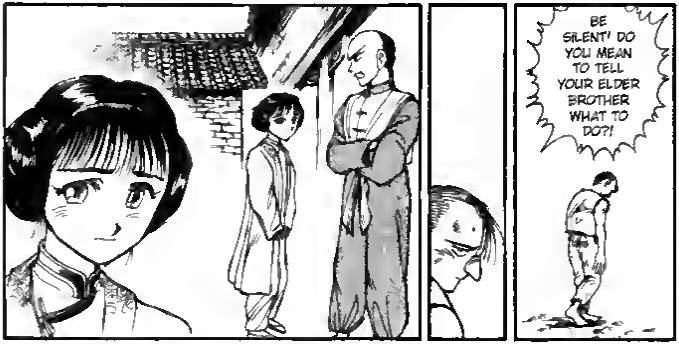
NO MATTER WHAT IT WAS, I'D BEAT THEM UP AND TAKE IT AWAY...
I ENVIED ANYONE WHO HAD ANYTHING...
NOBODY LIKED ME
MY STRENGTH WAS THE ONLY THING I HAD GOING FOR ME
I WAS A LITTLE SHRIMP FROM A POOR FAMILY
ONE DAY...
AND THEN
7
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?! GET OUT OF MY WAY!




A HUGE GATE THAT STOOD IN FRONT OF A QUAN FU DOJO.
FOR SOME REASON, I FOLLOWED HER. THE PLACE SHE ENTERED WAS...


NO ONE WILL BE ABLE TO LOOK DOWN ON ME!
IF I BECOME A TEACHER OF QUAN FU, I'LL BE RICH!
AT THAT MOMENT, I THOUGHT...
HAH.
HAH.

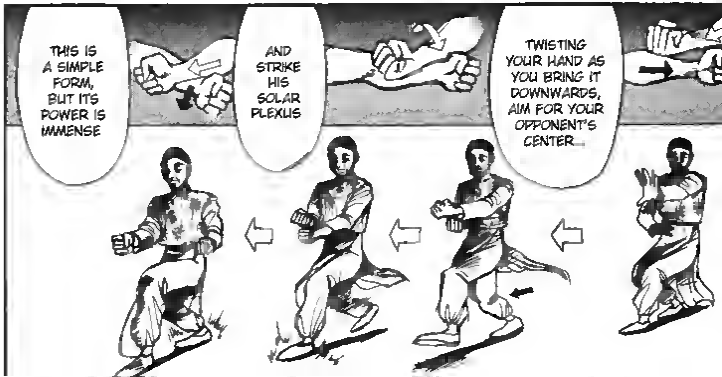

BUT ...
GET OUT OF HERE!
WE HAVE NOTHING TO TEACH A THUG LIKE YOU!
I WON'T SO MUCH AS BRING YOU TO SEE MY FATHER!

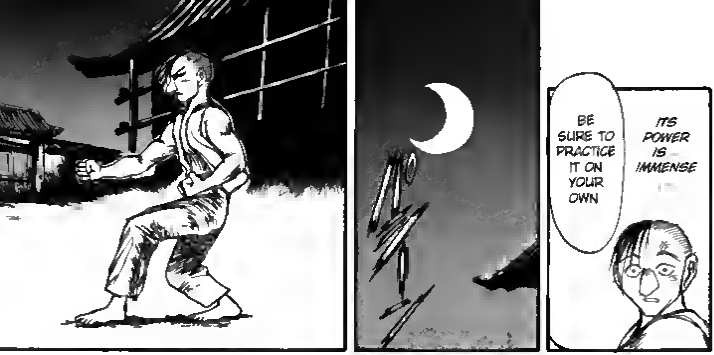

BE SILENT! DO YOU MEAN TO TELL YOUR ELDER BROTHER WHAT TO DO?!

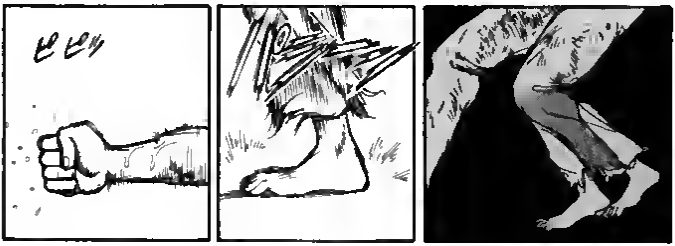
WHEN I WENT TO A NEIGHBORING VILLAGE...
SOME TIME AFTER THAT...

THE DOJO WHERE MASTER LI LUONENG TAUGHT THE XING YI QUAN STYLE.
ONE
TWO
I ONCE AGAIN PASSED BY A QUAN FU DOJO. THIS ONE WAS...

WE HAVE NOTHING TO TEACH A THUG LIKE YOU!
BUT...
AND THE MONEY, TOO...
I WANT TO LEARN THIS! I WANT TO LEARN THIS, AND SHOW HIM WHAT I'M CAPABLE OF!
I BECAME A CONSTRUCTION WORKER
AT THE TIME, THERE WAS CONSTRUCTION GOING ON AT THE DOJO
AND I WOULD STEAL GLANCES AT MASTER LI'S FORM AS HE TAUGHT
THIS IS THE CRUSHING FIST.
IT IS ONE OF THE BASIC FIVE ELEMENT FISTS OF XING YI QUAN.


THIS IS A SIMPLE FORM, BUT IT'S POWER IS IMMENSE
AND STRIKE HIS SOLAR PLEXUS
TWISTING YOUR HAND AS YOU BRING IT DOWNWARDS, AIM FOR YOUR OPPONENT'S CENTER...


ITS POWER IS IMMENSE
BE SURE TO PRACTICE IT ON YOUR OWN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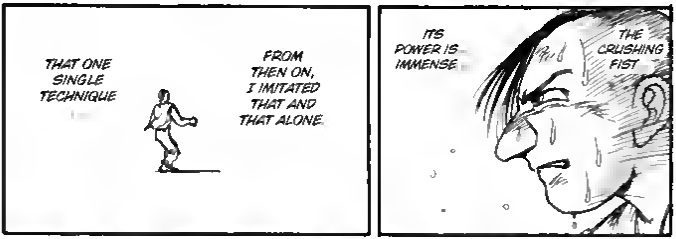
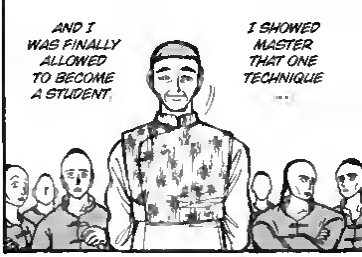

THE CRUSHING FIST
ITS POWER IS... IMMENSE
FROM THEN ON, I IMITATED THAT AND THAT ALONE
THAT ONE SINGLE TECHNIQUE

AND...
AFTER THREE YEARS...

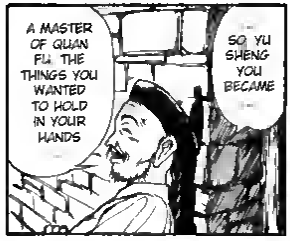
EVEN I DON'T REALLY KNOW WHY I WENT THAT FAR.
WOW... THREE YEARS PRACTICING A SINGLE TECHNIQUE! THAT'S REALLY SOMETHING!


AND I WAS FINALLY ALLOWED TO BECOME A STUDENT.
I SHOWED MASTER THAT ONE TECHNIQUE

I'M STILL DEEPENING MY UNDER-STANDING OF XING YI QUAN, EVEN NOW.
THAT'S MY SIG-NATURE VERSION OF THE CRUSHING FIST.
JUST WITH THAT HALF-STEP FORWARD AND A BLOW FROM ONE FIST?
HOHO SO, NOW, YOU COULD FIGHT ANYONE UNDER HEAVEN WITH-OUT FINDING AN EQUAL

12

I WISH TO DO BATTLE WITH YOU.
YOU ARE YU SHENG?


A MASTER OF QUAN FU. THE THINGS YOU WANTED TO HOLD IN YOUR HANDS
SO, YU SHENG YOU BECAME

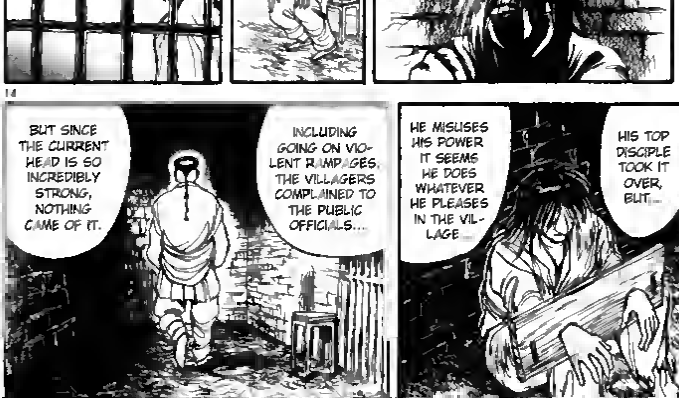
DID YOU MANAGE TO TAKE HOLD OF THEM?

JAILER
HMPH SO THAT QI YUAN GUY WAS HIM
YOU'RE THE MAN WHO CAME TO OUR DOJO LONG AGO
I AM NOW THE HEAD OF THAT DOJO
LET'S SEE JUST WHAT YOU'RE MADE OF!
I DIDN'T WANT TO TAKE HOLD OF THEM.
THE STRONGER I BECAME, THE LESS THAT MATTERED TO ME
13
BUT STRANGELY ENOUGH
I TOOK UP MARTIAL ARTS BECAUSE THERE WERE MANY THINGS I WANTED TO HOLD IN MY HANDS

THERE ARE MEN IN THIS WORLD LIKE YOUR SON...
MEN WITH HANDS THAT CAN BRING HAPPINESS TO A WOMAN, OR HOLD A CHILD.
BUT...
MY HANDS ARE ALWAYS CLENCHED TIGHTLY.

THEY CANNOT...
HOLD ONTO ANYTHING.

AH, RIGHT... I SUPPOSE TELLING YOU THIS WON'T FIX ANY OF IT, BUT...
THE DOJO OF THAT MARTIAL ARTIST YOU KILLED HAS GOTTEN A BAD REPUTATION.
WELL, I SHOULD CHECK IN ON THE OTHER CELLS NOW...
.....
THAT MUST BE... HARD...


BUT SINCE THE CURRENT HEAD IS SO INCREDIBLY STRONG, NOTHING CAME OF IT.
INCLUDING GOING ON VIOLENT RAMPAGES, THE VILLAGERS COMPLAINED TO THE PUBLIC OFFICIALS...
HE MISUSES HIS POWER IT SEEMS HE DOES WHATEVER HE PLEASES IN THE VILLAGE...
HIS TOP DISCIPLE TOOK IT OVER, BUT...

HE WANTS TO MARRY THE YOUNGER SISTER OF THE FORMER HEAD...
AND MAKE THE DOJO HIS IN EVERY RESPECT.
BUT SHE IS UN-WILLING
OR SO I HEAR

SFX: SQUEAK, CLATTER, WHACK

SFX: CLENCH

SFX: SQUEAK

SFX: CLATTER, CLATTER, WHACK

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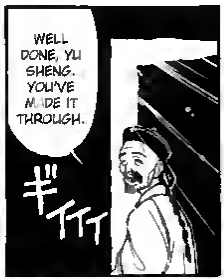
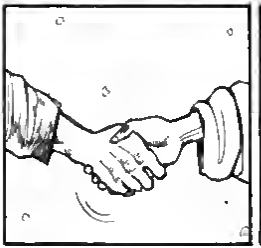
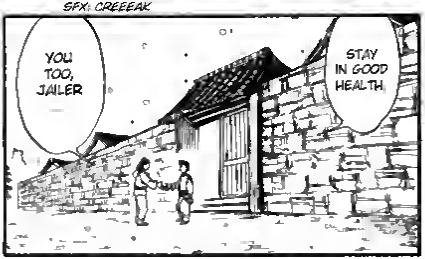

WELL DONE, YU SHENG. YOU'VE MADE IT THROUGH.
ギィィィ

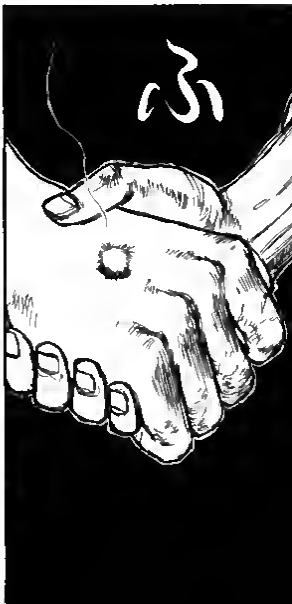
ガコン

SFX: CREEEAK




YOU TOO, JAILER
STAY IN GOOD HEALTH

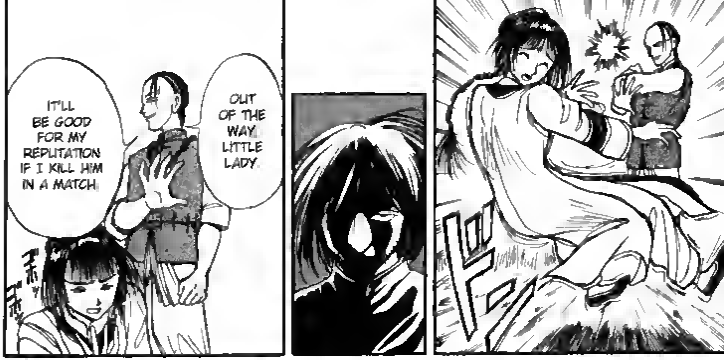
HOHOHO, IT'S RIDING ON YOU! LOOK AT THAT, THERE'S A WILLOW CATKIN CATCHING A RIDE ON YOU!



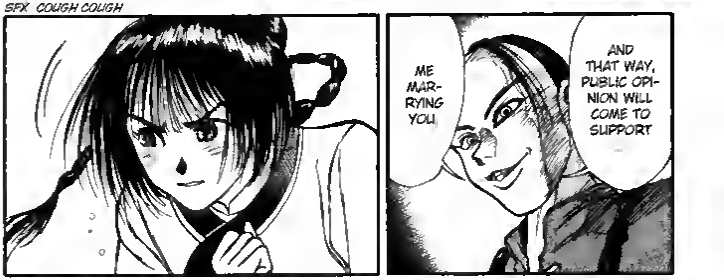
OF COURSE, I'VE NEVER BEEN TO SCHOOL, SO I'M NO EXPERT
EVEN IF YOUR HAND IS GRIPPED TIGHT IN ONE SHAPE, THERE ARE SOME THINGS LIGHT ENOUGH TO RIDE UPON IT.

THAT MIGHT BE ALL YOU NEED?
BUT DON'T YOU THINK...

I HAVE WAITED FOR THREE YEARS TO DEFEAT YOU.
YU SHENG
MY NAME IS MA
I TOOK CHARGE OF THE DOJO AFTER MY MASTER WAS KILLED THREE YEARS AGO



SFX COUGH COUGH



18

YOU WOULD MAKE A WOMAN YOUR OPPONENT ?
YOUR BIG BROTHER MUST BE SPINNING IN HIS GRAVE RIGHT NOW!
HA HA HA HA
HEH HEH... I KNOW THE WHOLE STORY HERE, LITTLE LADY.
YOU ALWAYS USED TO WATCH YU SHENG AS HE PRACTICED. HE'S THE ONE WHO GETS YOU ALL FIRED UP

I'M READY TO GO ANYTIME.
MY JAILER'S STORIES WERE ALWAYS INTER-ESTING ....
YOU'RE NOT MUCH FUN TO LISTEN TO.
ヒュオ
WHAT WAS THAT ...?!
スパーン
OH, YEAH ?!
I'LL KILL YOU WITH THIS BLOW!
A MARTIAL ARTIST WITH A WITHERED LOWER BODY ISN'T WORTH SHIT!
YOU'VE SPENT 3 YEARS IN A CELL WITH YOUR HANDS AND FEET SHACKLED!

THE MONEY TO BUY WHATEVER I WANT...
DELICIOUS THINGS TO EAT AND DRINK...
I WANTED TO TAKE HOLD OF ...

20

OF A BEAUTIFUL WOMAN ...
THE HAND ...

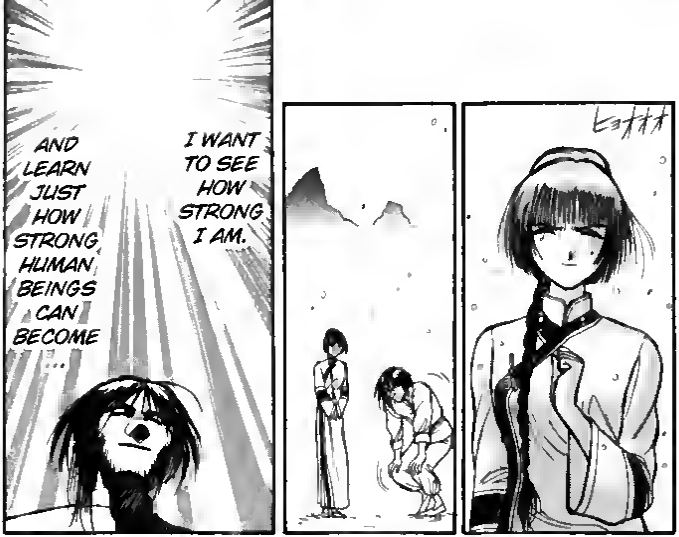
A WARM AND WELCOMING HOME LAUGHTER

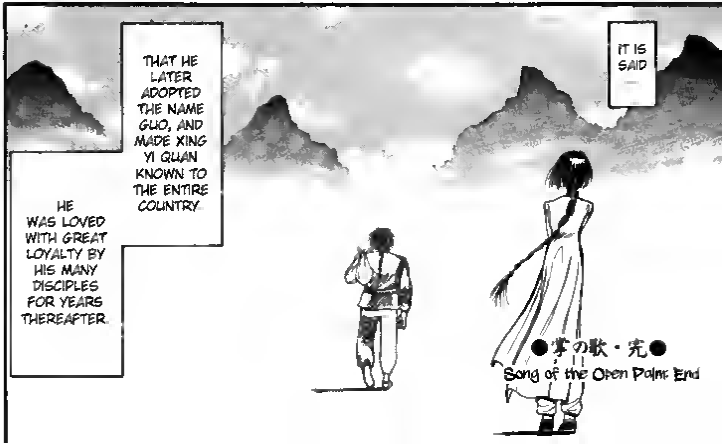
AND...

..EEP!

EVEN THOUGH YOU'VE BEEN LOCKED UP... GAH...! YOU... YOU CAME UP WITH A NEW TECHNIQUE ?!
TH-THERE'S NO MOVE LIKE THAT IN XING YI QUAN...!
GYE-AAAHH !!

IT'S A VARIATION ON THE HU XING. THE TIGER SHAPE FROM XING YI QUAN'S 12 ANIMAL SHAPES
IT USES A SMALLER MOTION THAN THE HU XING
PERHAPS IT SHOULD BE CALLED THE HU PU SHOU. TIGER'S STRIKING PAW.
GOD...
I WANTED TO TAKE HOLD...
OF SO MANY THINGS...
BUT... RIGHT NOW...


AND LEARN JUST HOW STRONG HUMAN BEINGS CAN BECOME...
I WANT TO SEE HOW STRONG I AM.
DON'T YOU THINK THAT MIGHT BE ALL YOU NEED?
YU SHENG... EVEN IF YOUR HAND IS GRIPPED TIGHT IN ONE SHAPE... THERE ARE SOME THINGS LIGHT ENOUGH TO RIDE UPON IT.


IT IS SAID...
THAT HE LATER ADOPTED THE NAME GUO, AND MADE XING YI QUAN KNOWN TO THE ENTIRE COUNTRY.
HE WAS LOVED WITH GREAT LOYALTY BY HIS MANY DISCIPLES FOR YEARS THEREAFTER.
●掌の歌・完●
Song of the Open Palm: End